IN THE ABSTRACT

Please delete the current Abstract and substitute therefor the revised Abstract submitted herewith on a separate sheet at the end of this Amendment.

IN THE DRAWINGS:

Please delete the current drawings and substitute therefor the formal drawings submitted herewith.   A separate Submission of Formal Drawings is submitted herewith.

REMARKS

Applicants submit the present Amendment in response to the Office Action dated April 24, 2001. Reconsideration of the present application in light of the present remarks and comments is respectfully requested.

The Examiner objected to the Abstract as exceeding 25 lines. In response applicants are submitting herewith a shortened Abstract which is less then 25 lines.

Claims 1 - 19 are pending in this application and stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,020,884 to MacNaughton. According to the Examiner, MacNaughton discloses a system for having chat sessions with different levels of privacy; receiving a query for information regarding other users and searching a user database to determine which users are visiting a web site; requesting another user's predetermined personal data; displaying to the user the

usage information in a graphical or textual format; designating a web page as a homepage and monitoring usage of the homepage by a plurality of users.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner. A review of the cited reference indicates that MacNaughton discloses chat sessions between users who are community members where the community is associated with a particular URL. If the user belongs to a community, the user may then access a community Home Page and create, view and reply to community comments. A member of a community may also initiate chat sessions with other community members. A user affirmatively requests and completes a membership process for each community they wish to join. Also, a user may automatically become a member of certain communities, as some communities are open to all on-line users without the need to initiate a membership process. The membership process collects information about the user (e.g., preferences and profile data such as interests, hobbies, and favorites web sites).

Claim 1 of the present application differs from the system disclosed in MacNaughton in the following ways. The first step of the method recited in Claim 1 requires receiving from a first user their ID and the address of the web server being visited. Similarly, the second step requires receiving from a second user, on the same web server, their ID and the web server's address. MacNaughton does not teach receiving, from either user, the address of the web server being visited. Significantly, two other limitations recited in Claim 1 are absent from the disclosure in MacNaughton. These two limitations are (a) receiving from the first user a request to

open either a public, semi-public, or private chat session with a second user; and (b) transmitting to the second user an indication the first user has requested either a public, semi-public, or private chat session. While MacNaughton discloses public and private chat sessions, the present invention of a semi-public chat session, where access to the session by non-invited users is based on their own user profile, is not disclosed in MacNaughton. Claims 2-6 are dependent on claim 1, and therefore, the same arguments presented here would apply equally to these latter claims. Independent claims 12 and 13 are apparatus claims which correspond to the independent method claim 1 discussed above.

In general, the approach presented by MacNaughton resembles something like newsgroups (or other kinds of communities), where the user subscribes, and acts as a member who has access to the information. The information is sent by the members, and every member can view it. As discussed herein, the claimed invention does not deal with registering to a community in order to chat with its members, but rather in some aspects is directed to a tool for locating users such that any information source being visited by users (e.g. web-site) can be the characteristics that allows them to be found, thus enable communicating with them. This is one attribute in addition to the demographic attributes.

Further, there are additional differences between independent claim 7 of the present application and what is disclosed in the MacNaughton reference. Particularly, the present invention as set forth in claim 7 allows users to designate a web site as

a homepage and then receive usage information regarding that web site while they are visiting a second web page. The Home Page described in MacNaughton is a core capability designed to introduce the user to the community. These Home Pages are predetermined, each is associated with a particular community, and can not be designated by the user. Additionally, information regarding activity on the Home Page is not transmitted to users while visiting other web sites, but instead is sent to users who have just entered the community. Dependent claims 8-11 are dependent on claim 7, and therefore, the same arguments presented here would apply equally to these latter claims. Independent claims 14 and 15 are apparatus claims which correspond to the independent method claim 7 discussed above.
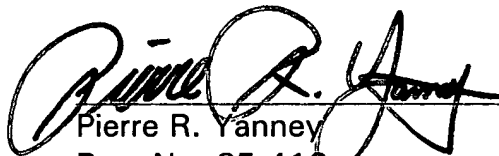
Similar to independent claim 1, independent claims 16, 18 and 19 of the present application differ from the system disclosed in MacNaughton in the following ways. The first step of the method recited in claims 16, 18 and 19 requires receiving from a first user their ID and the address of the web server being visited. Similarly, the second step requires receiving from a second user, on the same web server, their ID and the web server's address. MacNaughton does not teach receiving, from either user, the address of the web server being visited. Claim 17 is dependent on claim 16, and therefore the present arguments with respect to claim 16 are equally applicable to claim 17.

Each and every point raised in the Office Action dated April 24, 2001 has been addressed on the basis of the above amendments and remarks. Reconsideration and

withdrawal of the objections and rejections are respectfully requested. However, should the Examiner believe that direct contact with the Applicants' attorney would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number given below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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